



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction



## Early Childhood Education Alert

ECSE 7

April 2008

### To Early Childhood Special Education Administrators – Vision Screenings

As detailed in the Early Childhood Education Alert 4 dated March, 2007, the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) has Recommended Guidelines for vision screenings by Arizona public, charter and private schools. A child's vision must be part of the screening process ([AAC R7-2-401\(D\)\(6\)](#)) prior to proceeding with assessing a preschool child to determine eligibility for preschool special education services. The intent of the requirement is to rule out the possibility that a child's poor performance on an assessment may be primarily due to vision issues rather than cognitive deficits. Therefore, it is not permissible to indicate on evaluation reports that the child was "unable to be tested" nor is the use of "functional vision" tools permissible.

As a follow up to our previous alert, the following additional information is being provided regarding children who are unable to be conditioned for vision screening. The Local Education Agency (LEA) may: 1. refer the child to be screened by one of the more passive tools; or 2. use the Vision Screening Checklist developed by the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind. The screeners should practice due diligence in attempting the vision screening using adaptations and modifications such as having the child match shapes or puzzle pieces. The Vision Screening Checklist should be utilized only if a child cannot be conditioned to respond to screening assessment tools. A copy of that tool follows on page two of this alert and may be found on the ADE Early Childhood Website under screenings and assessments. A school nurse and or vision specialist may also be a good resource for products or services.

#### Resource Links:

- Department of Health Services, [http://azdhs.gov/phs/owch/pdf/vision\\_screening\\_2004.pdf](http://azdhs.gov/phs/owch/pdf/vision_screening_2004.pdf)
- Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-401(D)(6), [http://www.azsos.gov/public\\_services/Title\\_07/7-02.htm#Article\\_4](http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_07/7-02.htm#Article_4)
- Lea Visual Acuity cards and puzzles are available from the Good-Lite Company
- Teller Acuity Cards are available from the Good-Lite Company
- Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind [www.asdb.state.az.us](http://www.asdb.state.az.us)
- Prevent Blindness America – Arizona [www.pbaz.org](http://www.pbaz.org)

Valerie Andrews James, Program Administrator, Early Childhood Special Education  
Mailing Address: 1535 West Jefferson, Bin 15, Phoenix, Arizona 85007  
Physical Address: 2005 North Central Avenue, 2nd Floor, Phoenix, Arizona 85004  
602.542.5448 [www.ade.az.gov/earlychildhood](http://www.ade.az.gov/earlychildhood)